

My Name is _____, I live at _____. Fifty of my concerned citizens and I are here to share our concerns about your management of our reservoirs and why we feel sweeping changes are imperative not only for the quality of our water supply, but also for the financial future of Spartanburg County and the growth we wish to sustain as a community.

For convenience of communication, we have provided copies of our concerns to local media outlets.

This message is for Spartanburg Water's Commissioners along with the City and County residents who have heard the ads on the radio, and who have been fed information about how you are trying to protect their water, and how the homeowners around their three lakes are a threat to their drinking water. Today will set the record straight and expose the lies and mis-information that the Public and The Honorable leaders of Spartanburg City and County have been given, as well as the double-standard being applied to some lake residents, not to mention the mis-management of our Water Supply.

We citizens, who truly care about our drinking water, respectfully request your consideration of our concerns :

1). Beginning in 2015, City and County residents began complaining of a sour odor and foul taste in the water provided by SWS. SWS told customers that it was due to increased algae levels in the lakes and that SWS was working to resolve the concerns. By all accounts and information from several other Water Systems in this state, the algae bloom was created by SWS' negligence and mis-management by not lowering the lake levels in the winter months to allow the shorelines to "freeze" which reduces the natural algae blooms that occur in the summer months.

2). We have been told by certain respected individuals within SWS, that the SWS Chairman gave the order to not lower the lakes. We also have been told that this order was given so as to not interfere with the Chairman's duck hunting. After the Algae blooms occurred, SWS responded to public outcry with a public campaign to blame the lakefront homeowners and development in the area for the algae problems. Funny thing, though, algae blooms were hardly an issue in the past years when the lakes were lowered in the winter.

The original attempt by SWS to eradicate the algae was to use underwater mowers to cut up the algae. This not only did not work, but it made the algae come back stronger.

Next, the SWS sprayed toxic chemicals into our drinking water to kill the algae. We have it under authority that this decision was made by the SWS CEO, who researched and approved the company and chemical to be sprayed in our lakes. As a result, at the direction of SWS, what followed was the largest fish kill in the history of South Carolina. Over 200,000 fish were killed.

3). Adding to the environmental debacle, is the fact that SWS Participated in a cover-up of this colossal failure. Only when a concerned lakefront homeowner called the South

Carolina Department of natural Resources was the SWS mistake documented. SC DNR is on public record having said that SWS tried to cover up the fish kill it created. Further, SC DNR has said that it took several requests to stop burying the dead fish before SWS would stop the coverup. If the chemicals killed fish, just think of the harm it caused to other living things, animal and human? What are the “down-stream” effects to humans months and years later?

Also a matter of public record- the fine levied by SC DNR to SWS was \$100K, AND, the 200,000 fish had to be restocked.

4). Fallen trees have been allowed to remain in the lakes, rotting and contaminating the lakes.

You have stated that you want a natural buffer zone around the lakes.

Lakes , when left unprotected by seawalls or stone, allow the roots of trees to be exposed, weakening the earth around them, allowing them to fall into the lakes. Lake Homeowners have not been allowed to remove these trees even when they wish to do so at their own expense. Yet, SWS has time and again proven that they wish to leave them to continue to rot and contaminate our waters.

How can this be homeowner’s causing a contamination issue , as you’ve been quoted by the media, when we’ve been threatened by your 84 page document of rules to NOT remove any fallen trees or trim any limbs below the 827 line?

5). Our lakes are filling in. Roadway runoff, and development around the lakes and unmanaged shorelines have caused many areas around the lakes to be five feet more shallow than they were 10 years ago. At the present rate, with many portions of our lakes being twenty-three feet deep OR LESS, the lakes will fill in with silt within 40 years.

6). SWS needs to be working with the Dept. of Transportation to ensure not only that they are planting vegetation to filter the road and bridges runoff and debris, but also that they are NOT spraying RoundUp and Cross Bow which contain known cancer causing chemicals around the bridges that cross over the lakes and feeder streams.

7). SWS needs to work with the area farmers to protect our water. Farm animals (cows, etc) have been allowed to graze in the creeks and streams that fill our lakes. This also means that these cows defecate into our water, and in many cases, this is done on Spartanburg Water’s property. Why is this allowed , when in the 84 page document , it purports to restrict lakefront homeowners from allowing their domestic animals (dogs) to urinate on the grass near by the lake?

Why not allow the farmers to pump lake water to a retention pond to allow the cattle to drink and keep the cattle out of the lake?

8). Why is SWS not making their water testing results public for all to see? When, where and how often are you testing, and how do the test results differ lake by lake and from within various locations on each lake? We, the lake owners maintain that testing of contaminate levels along manicured lawns and seawalls will show lower contaminate levels in those locations vs the levels along the natural shorelines.

9). As an example of why a natural shoreline with weeds, undergrowth and various other types of vegetation won't work can be seen by looking at Reservoir 1 and Lake Welchel in Gaffney...they both have natural shorelines as SWS has said is preferred, yet, both Reservoir 1 and Lake Welchel, as well as other lakes within the state have experienced major algae blooms in recent years. These bodies of water all have fallen and rotting trees, silt from road runoff, and waste from farm animals and large birds which all contribute to an algae problem.

10). Per the South Pacolet River Watershed Based Plan for Nutrient Load Reduction in Lake Bowen and Municipal Reservoir #1, the estimated existing Total Nitrogen, based on monitoring results, is nearly the same as was estimated by the United States Geological Survey in 1976, while the loading of Total Phosphorus has increased nearly threefold since 1976. An observed increase in nitrates over time could be attributed to untreated animal waste entering the lakes. Per the report, pastureland appears to be the largest single contributor of nutrient Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorus loads within the watershed. A natural, overgrown shoreline will do nothing to help with the algae problem.

11). It is past time for the leadership of SWS to begin to work with the lake front property owners of the 3 lakes/reservoirs to truly have clean water.

12). It is vitally important that SWS and the lakefront owners realize that they are partners in the challenge of keeping the lakes healthy.

SWS needs to put a plan in place for all bodies of water to stabilize the shorelines, to prevent erosion in the lakes which is damaging them at an alarming rate.

It should be noted that currently Lake Lure requires anyone who is developing a shoreline property to construct a seawall or at least riprap the shoreline, or request an exemption justifying why the shoreline does not need protection.

Duke Energy controls 26 lakes and uses similar protection methods to protect the shorelines of their lakes.

There are federal funds available for the construction of shoreline protection, and dredging recreational lakes.

SWS can and should apply for these funds and begin a new phase of proactive solutions which will save our lakes and increase their longevity.

SWS needs to work with the lakefront owners to find viable solutions to protect these resources to insure safe and clean drinking water for the citizens of Spartanburg city and county and for the growth of our county for generations to come.

13). For the record, the addition of Sterile Carp into the lake as an eco-friendly method to reduce and eat the algae and the algae blooms was at the suggestion of a homeowner during one of your previous public meetings. It was NOT an idea that originated within the walls of SWS.

14). The Bubbler system, installed in 2017 or 2018 , at a cost of \$4M into Lake Bowen has either proven to be a mistake or hasn't been maintained because SWS has continued to spray chemicals into the water. This is an expensive monthly endeavor.....\$250K per month! , and obviously, It isn't working. We, the public tax paying, water drinking public demand to know what these chemicals are, and why they continue to be applied despite the fact that they are not working.

15). The geese continue to be a major source of water contamination. Why is there not a viable plan to manage the population of geese?

16). Why do you restrict the trimming of tree limbs? By trimming low tree limbs, sunlight is allowed to reach the ground, so that vegetation can grow which will actually hold back silt and topsoil. Silt and topsoil do nothing but fill in our lakes and potentially carry contaminants into the water,.

17). SWS has forced homeowners to implement planting plans at the homeowner's expense, but WITHOUT an expert horticulturist or landscape architect on staff. It is the opinion of the homeowners that you have forced them to harm our drinking water by forcing them to landscape in a manner that is detrimental to the water quality.

18). Maintaining a quality water supply is expensive, requires good management, and partnership with all stakeholders.

What will happen, if the proposed rules are adopted, thereby lowering all lakeowner's property values by 25% to 40% due to the fact that all lakeowner's properties become lake view rather than lake front??

ANSWER? - LOWER TAXES for the County

LESS money for our schools, and road maintenance

LESS MONEY FOR SWS - which, by the way has already seen a reduction in Wholesale Water Supplies of 55%

19). SWS has lost 21% in Water Sales.

We need a clean start, with leadership we can trust, and data we can rely upon regarding the quality of our drinking water. How can we trust that our drinking water is safe when you are applying chemicals in it every month?

20). SWS needs to address the global issues with the homeowners as a group rather than in individual meetings.

21). Why is Woodfin Golf course allowed to spray fertilizer on SWS Property when it knowingly washes into our drinking water? This contributes to the contamination of our water!

22). We respectfully wish to acknowledge that SWS has not acted in a manner that deserves our respect, or for that matter, the respect of any citizen entrusting you with maintaining our drinking water quality when you do not publish your test results nor do you report your financials to the City of Spartanburg nor follow the laws of this state governing municipalities and franchises furnishing water or waste disposal. We refer to SC Title 5-5-10-20, as well as 5-7-110, 5-51-50 5-31-260, and 5-31-270. When did you last request approval from the City Council for incurring debt, like the failed Bubbler System, or the 72 acres purchased by SWS off the Pacolet River?

23). Why has SWS pulled out of the Lake Clean-up Days, currently being performed by lakefront homeowners and community volunteers? Why not do as most utilities, and hold these clean up days on a Friday when SWS Employees can work alongside of volunteers, and the efforts of all involved can be rewarded by a dinner-cookout?

24). Why would you refuse to allow a homeowner to pay for the dredging of the cove near his home? This would not only help to keep the lake clean of debris, but also, the deeper water would be cooler, and allow for less algae growth.

25). Spartanburg City has direct responsibility for SWS.

SC Code # 5-51-50 speaks to the exclusive franchise of furnishing water or waste disposal by the cities and towns of SC.

SC Code # 5-31-260 speaks to indebtedness- which the board of commissioners may not incur without the concurrence of the City or Town council. Have your debts and large expenditures been approved by City and County Council? Especially those expenses for chemical spraying? DNR Fines? Fish Restocking?, Ineffectual Bubbler Systems?

SC Code #5-31-270 says that each board of commissioners of Public Works shall make a full statement to City and or town council at the end of each month for receipts and disbursements in the preceding month. Has this been done?

26). Spartanburg County was recently ranked 6th nationally in industrial growth. NOT protecting our water will be devastating to our economy, and an embarrassment to our city, county, and state.

27). The combination of not protecting our water quality, the lakes, and implementing the proposed rules will have a negative impact on the entire community due to the reduction in lakefront home values. The homes around the lakes generate \$10million in tax revenue annually. The reduced value of these homes becoming lake VIEW lots will result in a \$5 million short fall in Spartanburg County's tax revenue. This can only be

replenished by increased taxes on the rest of the county or a reduction in services offered by the county like park maintenance, walking trails, or other public amenities.

Public schools receive approximately 65% of the county's tax income. A reduction in home values can only translate into a reduction in dollars flowing into our schools to the tune of \$3.25 million annually. Our students deserve better than that.

28). SWS needs to follow the same policy as the Spartanburg City and County councils regarding public speakers. They allow speakers to fill out a form up to 30 minutes before a published meeting. City and County Council make it easy for citizens to speak in the public comment period, at well published times and places, after normal work hours to ensure easier access for those wishing to attend and/or speak.

In contrast, Speakers at SWS meetings must apply via form before noon the Thursday before the meeting to be held on a Tuesday. Meeting times and places are not well published, and are held during normal business hours, making it more difficult for people to speak. Many people have to take time off from work in order to speak at a SWS meeting.

29). As Board members, you are all elected officials representing the City and County of Spartanburg. SWS is not your private company.

30). We respectfully request an answer to the question of why the lake wardens are the only deputized law enforcement officers in the state, when the SC DNR has agents patrolling without any problems? Why are these wardens both employees of SWS and Law Enforcement? To whom do they report? Are their processes and procedures fair and equally applied to all landowners and situations?

31). Why are homeowners subjected to new rules forcing them to obtain engineering drawings costing at least \$1500 to replace rotting boards on their docks? These rotting boards present a safety and water quality issue when they break and fall into the water, potentially harming not only the water, but boats, and people too. Would the wardens want rusty nails on a board damaging their props and hulls? Or worse, getting thrown by a propeller and becoming a projectile to injure innocent human life?

Furthermore, and after this rule about the engineering drawings was withdrawn, why was the \$1500 engineering fee only refunded to those homeowners who knew enough to request a refund?

How is an engineering drawing for the replacement of boards relative to water quality?

32). Why are no trespassing signs being placed in homeowner's yards without any written or verbal notification of suspected violations by the homeowner?

33). Why would SWS Deny any homeowner's access to navigable water ways? This is a right of all citizens of SC. The water is not owned by SWS, it is owned by the people of this state.

34). Why has SWS revoked the permits of homeowners for doing things such as trimming tree limbs? This should not result in that homeowner's permits for boats, or docks being revoked. Trimming trees is unrelated to having a dock or a boat.

35). SWS should not be revoking permits due to fake violations and certainly not due to unwritten and variable violations only to require the homeowner to request a new permit and to shoulder the financial burden of improvements based on these loose and unwritten policies and rules.

36). Why would one homeowner be allowed to create a man-made peninsula on his property that required the lowering of the lake?

37). Why has SWS removed the public fishing areas like the one that had been around the dam? Why is there now an 8 foot fence around this area? Where else is SWS planning on erecting more fencing?

38). Why did SWS recently apply for an hydroelectric permit at a cost of over \$200K, only to discover it was not eligible for these permits? Did The City Council approve of this expenditure? How would that help protect our water and water quality?

39). Why does it sometimes take SWS over a year to approve a dock permit, when we are continually told it only takes 14 days?

40). Permits issued, then subsequently and immediately revoked and not refunded is not only not fair, it's an intimidation tactic that borders on a gestapo tactic.

41). What is the true reason behind SWS losing the wholesaler contracts with ICWD, SJWD, and Woodruff Roebuck Water districts?

This has resulted in a loss of revenue to SWS of over \$4M annually. Inman, Campobello Water now has their water supply pumped in from NC and they sell it to their customers at a much lower rate than what SWS is charging its customers.

We have it on authority that this has caused the shutdown of the Whitlock plant, which at this point would cost tens of millions of dollars to restart.

Is City Council aware of this?

42). What is the purpose of the shell company created by SWS to purchase property? Is it to prevent other water company wholesalers from purchasing that property?

Why would SWS purchase over 70 acres of lake front land which includes a home? Why is this property needed by SWS? As Tax payers, we deserve to know, and most certainly , the City and County Commissioners need to know the plans for this, and other land purchases made by SWS.

43). Why have the lake wardens been encroaching upon homeowner's docks and boats without the homeowner present , without a warrant, or even the suspicion of wrongdoing? This is trespassing on the part of the lake wardens. How is this activity related to water quality?

Why are the wardens allowed to do this? At the behest of SWS?

Why is this happening now, when it never happened in the previous 30+ years of these lakes and reservoirs.

44). Why did SWS Spend \$75K at the request of the CEO to update/purchase buoys at the Dam on Lake Bowen, when these buoys are neither Coast Guard nor SCDNR Approved? We have it on good authority that SC DNR would have provided approved buoys at no cost to SWS if they had only been asked.

45). The EPA has labeled the Pacolet River as polluted. As customers of SWS and tax paying citizens, we respectfully request that you share with the public what you have done to protect our water from its polluted source water. Have you worked with the farmers upstream who allow their livestock to enter the water, and , no doubt, defecate in the water? What about planting plans like you have required of lakefront owners? What about dredging the area where the river meets Lake Bowen?

46). How does having more than one communications director on staff at SWS translate into better water quality? As a small water utility company, only one, at most should be needed. Many large national companies with consumer products only employ one communications director. Maybe having more communications directors somehow translates into better management of the geese?

47). When can those homeowners who were forced into signing the LAA expect all of their deeds to be returned to the former wording- that which it was prior to the signing of the LAA which was recorded in the county courthouse?

48). Why is SWS using Drones to monitor the lakes? Furthermore, why are the drones encroaching onto homeowner's land beyond the 827? Is SWS maintaining all the proper permits for these drones, and flying them in concert with all FAA rules and regulations?

49). When can we expect feedback on the 84 page rules document , the comment period which expired on August 30th?

50). We respectfully request that this Commission expand it's current structure from three City Residents. The overwhelming majority of your customer base resides outside of the City of Spartanburg, and considering that they all pay 40% higher rates, they should have representation on your Commission. The Commission should also include a lakefront homeowner that lives full time on one of the three reservoirs. This individual would be able to provide insight outside the scope of the current Commission. We further submit that anything short of approving of this request suggests that your purpose is something other than that of providing clean water.

51). Why, when SWS is so far in debt does it continue to donate to charitable causes? This is not only foolish, but calls into the question of why this is approved, and by whom? How does this relate to better water quality?

52). We respectfully submit that all future contractual bids be awarded on the basis of quality of the prospective contractor's work and cost, rather than favor being given to any company which donates to charities which are in favor of the SWS Board, and CEO. All bid approval processes should withstand the scrutiny of having merit based on the financial and quality aspects of the individual/companies submitting bids.

53). Why is SWS not submitting it's monthly financials to the City of Spartanburg. Could this be due to the fact that several recent expenditures have not resulted in resolution to the algae problems?

54). How is the annexation of the Chairman's home into the City Limits while other homes in the same neighborhood are not also annexed possible? Surely the Chairman didn't want to pay higher taxes out of the goodness of his heart. Surely his lifelong ambition was not to ensure that Spartanburg has better water quality? Was there some other reason that he might have wanted this not the least of which involved a position on the board? What other reasons could there be? We have all used our imagination, and it doesn't involve better water quality.

55). Why have the wardens said to Numerous people and I quote: "I have no say about THAT...situation...fill in the blank....our CEO is overseeing that situation personally"? Why are we being told that the CEO is overseeing one homeowner issue over another? Why not oversee all situations? Is this in the name of Water Quality?

56). We respectfully request full disclosure on The Milliken Project, and how that relates to Water Quality, and was this done with the full endorsement of the City and County Council?

57). Who really has instructed senior leadership at SWS to stop lowering the lakes in the winter? Was it to benefit one particular individual who sits on the board, at the risk of jeopardizing the water quality, while causing us to all have to deal with this algae bloom every summer?

58). Why are residents of Reservoir 1 no longer allowed to place permanent seating structures such as seating areas and docks on SWS Property? They weren't causing water quality issues before, but why is SWS now so emphatically saying that it does?

59). Why is SWS forcing lakefront owners to sign documents to move the property lines and change their deeds in favor of Spartanburg Water without compensation to the landowners? Further, why is SWS surveying the entire property of some homeowners, including the front yards? Will SWS be making restitution for the property of homeowners that they have damaged? How is this related to water quality?

60). Why are homeowner's permits being denied without reason, with no appeal process for the homeowner? Rules need to be clear, succinct, and applied equally to all.

61). We take issue with the ever moving survey pins on some properties, sometimes the same surveyor has performed multiple surveys on the same property, yet the pins have moved by SEVERAL FEET! FEET! Not inches!. What has happened lately is that in summary, SWS is claiming land that was not in the original purchase of the land for Lake Bowen. Any surveys done should be performed by an independent surveyor with no connection to SWS.

62). The Lakeowners desire a relationship with the wardens such as we had for almost 40 years. That was a relationship of mutual respect and trust. The wardens worked with the landowners, and while we didn't always agree with them, at least they were fair and equitable, and the landowners weren't afraid to bring things to their attention and ask for help. Currently, with the wardens having the same powers as real law enforcement agencies, and answering only to SWS, the landowners have experienced harassment, and the wardens have overstepped their authority. We implore you to make the necessary changes so that the landowners can once again work with the wardens with mutual trust.

63). What's the purpose of the Press Pause program , and why is it needed now? The landowners have never questioned the fact that the land below the 827 was not our land, but we have treated it as though it was, and have cared for it. We understand that you want to know what's on the land, and how the land is being used, but after the harassment and overreaching actions by SWS and it's wardens of the recent 24 months, we can't trust that SWS and this Press Pause program are in anyone's best interest.

We as adjacent land owners and customers of SWS, want clean water, and we want our lakes to be clean, but we need to work together to achieve that, with open minds and honesty try to work on a resolution for BOTH sides.

64) In conclusion, what We, as lakefront owners, citizens of Spartanburg county, and customers of SWS want is :

- *clean water
- * a utility company we can trust
- * Eco-friendly treatments used BEFORE using harmful chemicals
- * dredging of coves to improve water quality
- * Access to time, location, and the results of your water tests
- * Representation on the Commission
- * Permanent access to the water that as citizens , we own
- * the continued ability to filter storm water runoff with landscaped/manicured

lawns

* SWS Meeting times and public speaker comment rules which mirror the rules of City and County Council

* SCDNR to be the law enforcement on the lakes

* Wardens to assist the landowners and not be adversarial or harassing them

* An appeal process to handle denied permits

* the deeds on record should serve as the rule of where property lines are.

* SWS should engage with property owners in a group setting

* SWS should pay for and remove all fallen trees that are contaminating our water

* Lake rules should be based on water quality and water safety

* Dam inspections should be made by licensed professionals, and made public

* we want a good clean water product , sold to us at a fair price.

* a board of commissioners of 7 members, including at least one lakefront homeowner

* Leadership of SWS that can be fair and trusted by all – lakefront homeowners, citizens of the county, City and County Council

Thank you